

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 06974 211600Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 6974

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PL

SUBJECT: GIEREK HOLDS FIRST QUASI-PRESS CONFERENCE1. FIRST SECRETARY
GIEREK HELD A TWO-HOUR SESSION WITH

"NATIONAL" MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES NOVEMBER 20 AT THE CENTRAL
COMMITTEE BUILDING, THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF "REGULAR,
PERIODIC MEETINGS" WITH POLISH NEWSMEN, ACCORDING TO THE
PRESS. DETAILS OF THE DISCUSSION WERE NOT REPORTED EITHER
IN THE ACCOUNTS CARRIED IN THE EVENING NEWS BROADCASTS OR
ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NEXT DAY'S NEWSPAPERS. HOWEVER, THE
LIST OF TOPICS COVERED A WIDE RANGE OF DOMESTIC AND INTER-
NATIONAL ISSUES, INCLUDING THE EFFECTS OF THE WESTERN ECONOMIC
"CRISIS" ON POLAND, CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS, THE FURTHER
DEVELOPMENT OF "SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY," YOUTH ACTIVITIES, THE
ROLE OF THE MEDIA AND "PRESS CRITICISM" IN IMPLEMENTING THE
SIXTH CONGRESS PROGRAM, AND POLAND'S "GROWING ROLE" IN
FOREIGN POLICY.

2. A POLISH JOURNALIST INFORMED US NOVEMBER 21 THAT GIEREK
FIRST ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO CONDUCT SUCH A MEETING ABOUT
TWO WEEKS AGO. ALTHOUGH GIEREK THEN STIPULATED THAT HE
WANTED TO MEET PRIMARILY WITH REGULAR CORRESPONDENTS, IT
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PAGE 02 WARSAW 06974 211600Z

TURNED OUT THAT THE BULK OF THE 150 PERSONS PARTICIPATING

REPRESENTED THE EDITORIAL ESTABLISHMENT INSTEAD. QUESTIONS WERE PREPARED IN WRITING AND WERE SIGNED. PERHAPS HALF WERE SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE, WITH THE REMAINDER COMING FROM THE FLOOR DURING THE DISCUSSION. CENTRAL COMMITTEE SECRETARY JERZY LUKASZEWICZ, WHO CHAIRED THE MEETING, CONTROLLED THE QUESTIONING, ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE. GENERALLY, THE SOURCES SAID, HIS COLLEAGUES DESCRIBED THIS INNOVATION AS "BETTER THAN NOTHING."

3. COMMENT: THE LOCAL AP OFFICE CONFIRMED THAT NO FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS WERE INVITED AND INDICATED IT MIGHT TRY FOR AN INVITATION TO GIEREK'S NEXT PRESS CONFERENCE. A POLISH JOURNALIST WHO HAD COVERED GIEREK'S TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES TOLD US SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT THE FIRST SECRETARY HAD BEEN MUCH IMPRESSED BY THE AMERICAN-STYLE PRESS CONFERENCE AND THAT THE GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH HIS OWN PUBLIC PERFORMANCE IN THE U.S. HAD ENCOURAGED HIM TO INTRODUCE SOMETHING SIMILAR FOLLOWING HIS RETURN. ALTHOUGH PUBLICATION OF THE INTERCHANGE AT THIS CONFERENCE HAS BEEN SEVERELY LIMITED, THE MERE FACT THAT SUCH A MEETING WAS ARRANGED, WITH THE PROMISE OF MORE TO COME, REPRESENTS AN INTERESTING INNOVATION IN THIS PART OF THE WORLD.
DAVIES

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